**Comenius University / International Journal of Clinical Legal Education Conference**

**ENCLE - IJCLE 2019 Improving the Future: Using Clinical Legal Education to Educate Lawyers for a Just Society**

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| Organisation of Lead Presenter | University of the Witwatersrand |
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| Title of Proposal  | Decolonising the CLE curriculum |
| Summary of Proposal | Decolonising the CLE curriculumSouth African Law Schools’ curricula remained largely Eurocentric since the end of apartheid in 1994. Western and African norms and philosophies differ and Afrocentric education lies within the domain of African Universities. Student protests in 2015 campaigned for decolonisation. When applying decolonisation to the CLE curriculum, the following distinguishing characteristics of the clinical course will be considered: culture, language, professional ethics and the clients frequenting the clinic. The CLE pedagogy of clinic duty, classroom teaching and student tutorial sessions will be applied in exploring the application of the CLE methodology to diversity challenges in decolonisation. |
| Abstract Proposal | Decolonising the CLE curriculumSince the end of the apartheid system in South Africa in 1994, Law Schools’ curricula remained largely Eurocentric, resulting in a decolonisation campaign by students in 2015, implying the removal of aspects reflecting a colonial culture. The historically dominant Eurocentric approach to law is not necessarily suited to South African society and the status quo should be critically evaluated. It is the responsibility of legal education to ensure that future lawyers are equipped to contribute to the transformation of society. Creating Afrocentric education therefore lies within the domain of African Universities, by way of holistic transformation. The relevance and objective of the session is to address ways in which decolonised CLE programmes can support the shaping of future lawyers’ aspirations and contributions to a just society. When applying the call for decolonisation to the CLE curriculum, the following distinguishing characteristics of the clinical course will be considered, namely culture, language, professional ethics and the clients frequenting the clinic.Language and culture is important in preparing students to enter the profession, as Western norms and philosophies differ from those in African philosophy. Language controls thought and actions and where people from different cultures, who speak different languages, see and behave to the universe differently, they will not perceive the same reality unless they have a similar culture. Researchers identified a link between culture and ethics, acknowledging the role of culture in informing someone’s sense of morality and ethics. In understanding professional ethics, students should embark on a journey of â€˜decolonising’ their minds by debating what it means to be African in a profession with a Western approach, ethos and orientation.The clinic client pool presents a diversity of race, gender, language, culture and educational sophistication. The only consistent factor is that they represent the indigent in the community. Apart from language barriers, students may be required to identify problems not solely based in law, but often of a social or cultural nature. Poverty therefore also needs to be understood as a problem of moral recognition.The three basic components of the CLE pedagogy consist of clinic duty, classroom teaching and student tutorial sessions with their clinicians.The presentation will explore the application of the CLE methodology to diversity challenges.I have been a legal educator with a phd in CLE for the past 20 years. |